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## Proper Names and Common Names – Problems at the Frontier of Chrematonymy

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Nazwa własna a nazwa pospolita – dylematy z pogranicza chrematonimii

Product names (also called *ergonyms* or *pragmatonyms*) belong to the group of functional chrematonymy, or marketing chrematonymy as it is called by onomasticians (Gałkowski, 2008, p. 52). The article deals with the names of confectionery products which make it difficult to classify them in the group of proper names. These names were excerpted from various culinary blogs available in 2017–2018. Similar examples have already been analysed in articles and monographs of Polish and Slavic onomastics (cf. Jaros, 2011; Badyda, 2011; Dawidziak-Kładoczna, 2013; Vlasova, 2017; Van, 2010; Âkovleva, 2006), however, the problem of the borderline between common and proper names has not been solved. The analysis of examples such as *mazurek*, *mazurek kajmakowy*, *Mazurek Joanny*, *sernik*, *Sernik z rosą* and *Legendarny sernik z mango* should lead to answers to the questions: Where is the boundary between proper and common names and is it possible to define it? Which product names are common (generic) and which are proper? Which names indicate the individual products and which – the product groups?

### THE MEANING OF PROPER NAMES

The distinction between proper and common names is a fundamental problem of onomastics and although there is a rich literature on the subject, the status of proper names is not fully defined (Kaleta, 2005, pp. 15–36; Mrózek, 2006, pp. 151–163). It is

essential to state that common names refer to a group of objects with specific characteristics and denote any specimen of a class, while proper names belong to individual entities, indicating their unique characteristics (Kaleta, 2005, pp. 16–19). Witold Mańczak (2001, p. 326) proposes that the basic criterion should be that “appellatives are generally translated from one language to another, while personal names are generally not translated”. The phrases *na ogół* (in general) and *w zasadzie* (in principle) weaken the value of this criterion and allow some deviation from the norm. In the case of product names, this criterion does not apply, because many names of drinks or cakes are translations from other languages, such as *Blue Lagoon / Błękitna Laguna*, *Blood Mary / Krwawa Mary*, *Sachertorte / Tort Sachera*, *Monkey bread / Małpi chleb*.

In addition, the problem becomes even more complicated because of the arbitrary division of the language system by onomasticians into semantic and deictic systems. According to this division, there are common names (*nomina appellativa*), which have lexical meaning, and personal names (*nomina propria*), which do not have such meaning, but are used only to indicate and designate objects (Kaleta, 2005, p. 16). This statement is contradicted by contemporary analyses of proper names, which often show that they not only carry categorical, etymological and genetic significance, but also pragmatic, emotional, metaphorical, associative or connotational significance (Kaleta, 2005, pp. 25–28; Rutkowski, 2005, pp. 99–110). In the case of product names, a pragmatic meaning linked to an advertising, marketing function, is of particular importance.

An additional problem with chrematonyms is to determine what is and what is not part of the name (cf. Badyda, 2011). This problem is not solved by spelling, because the name creators write the names of their baked goods in different ways: from lowercase letters, through the first upper case, each word beginning with capitals, or all the letters as capitals. The name *Sernik na zimno – “Konkret”* suggests that only the element *Konkret* is an onym, but other examples make us treat the name as a whole, e.g. *Sernik na zimno z owocami – nie za trudny*; *Ricotta Fruitcake – Sernik z suszonymi owocami*. Those names are treated this way (by placing the whole name in the header) by their creators as well as by website administrators who develop name catalogues. Małgorzata Dawidziak-Kładoczna (2013, p. 87) analyses the names of gastronomic products in a similar way as above. A supplementary element of the type *Sernik – przepis Cioci Anieli* is intended to identify a unitary product from a serial product, and over time it may become an element of the name. However, there are voices of scientists instructing to treat the elements *nie za trudny*, *Sernik z suszonymi owocami*, *przepis Cioci Anieli* as periphrases, i.e. circumlocutions, devoid of the status of onyms.

Is the name of the product a proper name with a single designation? Certainly not in the sense of prototype anthroponyms or toponyms. After all, *Sernik z rosą* is every cheesecake made according to the given recipe. But similarly, *Alfa Romeo*

*Mito* is every car in this series, *Sex on the beach* is every drink made from given ingredients, and *tulipan Kaczyńska* is every tulip of this species. Chrematonyms therefore have a borderline status within their own names and are often called *serial products* (cf. Tomasik, 2016). They do not always refer to a single denotation, and neither are characterised by a single reference (Rutkiewicz-Hanczewska, 2013, p. 284). They raise terminological problems and, as Robert Mrózek (2006, pp. 156–159) calls it, are characterized by onymic “mistiness”.

### GRAMMATICAL PROPERTIES OF PROPER NAMES

As linguists convince us, proper names are governed by their own grammatical laws. As elements of a deictic system, they cannot perform certain functions in a sentence. In the case of product names, grammatical tests verifying the functioning of proper names in a sentence, and especially their functioning as predicatives, as well as (to a lesser extent convincing) performing the function of demonstrative pronoun, turn out to be useful.

#### PREDICATIVE TEST

Sentences like *To ciasto jest sernikiem*; *To ciasto jest sernikiem na zimno*; *To ciasto jest sernikiem kajmakowym* are correct, which induces us to call them common names. However, sentences of the following type seem to be incorrect: *To ciasto jest Legendarnym sernikiem z mango* or *To ciasto jest Sernikiem Agnieszki*, because the added individual features – such as “commonly known in Poznań, legendary” or “made by Agnieszka” – require sentences such as: *To ciasto nazywa się Legendarny sernik z mango*; *To ciasto nosi nazwę Sernik Agnieszki*. Metaphorical names like *Błękitna laguna* or *Fale Dunaju* do not pass the predicative test, cf. incorrect sentences *\*To ciasto jest Błękitną laguną* or *\*To ciasto to Fale Dunaju*. This test proves that the product’s custom name does not assign content attributes to an object, but only distinguishes it from others.

#### PRONOMINAL TEST

The same names can be subjected to a pronominal test. While we can say: *Ten sernik jest dobry*; *Ten sernik na zimno jest dobry*; *Ten sernik kajmakowy jest dobry*; it is less justified to use demonstrative pronoun in sentences like *Ten Legendarny sernik*

*z mango jest dobry*; or *Ten Sernik Agnieszki jest dobry*, because the deictic pronoun is redundant here and we could do with sentences: *Legendarny sernik z mango jest dobry*; *Sernik Agnieszki jest dobry*; sentences with metaphorical names can be considered incorrect (or unused): *\*Ta Błękitna laguna jest dobra*; *\*Te Fale Dunaju są dobre*. Therefore, like demonstrative pronoun, proper name is only used to identify an object.

## THE FUNCTIONS OF PROPER NAMES

Apart from the information, nomination and identification function (Dawidziak-Kładoczna, 2013, p. 106), the names are to influence the imagination and senses (Zboralski, 1995), so they are to play an emotional (expressive), persuasive and marketing role (Rutkowski, 2003, pp. 239–254). Names of this type, through their metaphoricality, connotations and associations, indisputably enter the class of chrematonyms and are the instances of the types described already in such groups of names as names of drinks or teas (cf. Lech-Kirstein, 2001, pp. 283–292; Magda-Czekaj, 2001, pp. 311–318).

## MATERIAL ANALYSIS

The methods used to identify proper names lead to the division of product names into three groups: common names, common names with a differential marker and proper names. While the first and third groups pose no problems in determining their status, the second group is a borderline and, therefore, debatable set that cannot be easily classified.

### 1. COMMON NAMES

A large group of Polish cake names are appellatives, meaning generic names: *babka*, *babeczka*, *ciasto*, *mazurek*, *sernik*, *tort*, *rolada*, *placek*. It should be noted, however, that some common words were previously functioning as onyms. The processes of appellativization made those proper names become common names with time. Some of them have a history, e.g. *szarlotka* derives from the name of the sister-in-law of Alexander I, Tsar of Russia, Princess Charlotte (orig. *Charlotte Russe*). The proper names are also the origins of the names *mazurek* < *Mazur* (“inhabitant of Mazovia”) and *murzynek* < *Murzyn* (“a black man”). *Napoleonka* is associated with the city of Naples, although it is also associated with Napoleon

Bonaparte. The name of *wuzetka* is associated with the East-West Route (W-Z) – the cake was invented for the Food Crafts Guild competition in the 1940s and is served in cafés in Warsaw to this day.

## 2. NAMES WITH DIFFERENTIAL MARKER

In order to distinguish between individual denotations, differential markers were added to the common names over time. They were supposed to indicate a specific product and make it original and unique. However, some of the distinguishing elements have again become appellative. The group created in this way has a borderline character between appellatives and onyms. Debatable in this group are circumlocutions, which for formal reasons (name creators and website administrators include them in their names) and semantic reasons (these elements make serial products unique) I decided to include in the description.

Among the differential markers we can distinguish:

### A. The maker of a given cake, the author of the recipe

Providing the name of the author of a given recipe makes a product unique, e.g. *Sernik na zimno Aneczki*; *Sernik Agnieszki*; *Sernik Magda*; also *Gofry Gosiaczka*; *Tort twarożkowy wujka Mariana*. In this group of names we can also include names with circumlocutions, e.g. *Sernik – przepis Cioci Anieli*; *Sernik – przepis Cioci Marysi*; *Sernik Wiedeński – przepis Małgosi*; *Sernik – przepis Elżbiety Bujak*; *Sernik – przepis Irenki Dalki*; *Sernik – przepis Mamy M.*; *Sernik na zimno – przepis Małgosi*.

### B. Name of the place where the cake is baked

*Sernik wiedeński* probably reached Poland thanks to Jan III Sobieski, who returned from the Battle of Vienna. The citizens of Kraków modified the recipe slightly and enriched it with a chequered glaze, calling it *serniki krakowski*. *Sernik nowojorski* (Eng. Lindy's Cheesecake) comes from the legendary *Lindy's* restaurant located in New York City. *Sernik rosyjski* was most probably first made in Russia, it is distinguished by the fact that an additional ingredient are apples. *Sernik japoński*, also known as *sernik biszkoptowy* or *bawelniany* (Cotton Soft Japanese Cheesecake), is popular in Japan because it contains very little dairy products. Similarly, the place is associated with the names of *Sernik – Londyn*; *Sernik węgierski* or other names: *Baby warszawskie parzone*; *Deser północnoindyjski – Firnee*; *Białe pierniczki norymberskie*; *Strudel austriacki*.

### C. Characteristic ingredient

In order to distinguish among many types of cheesecake, a differential marker is attached indicating the ingredient used to bake it, e.g. *Sernik na zimno – z serkiem homogenizowanym*; *Sernik na zimno z owocami – nie za trudny*; *Sernik na zimno z owocami i galaretką*; *Sernik na zimno z twarożku homogenizowanego*; *Sernik brzoskwiniowy*; *Sernik malinowy*; *Sernik pomarańczowy*; *sernik z rodzynkami*; *Sernik z budyniem*; *Sernik z kremem kokosowym*; *Sernik z mandarynkami*; *Sernik z ziemniakami*; *Sernik z mleka*; *Sernik z twarożku homogenizowanego*; *Ricotta Fruitcake – Sernik z suszonymi owocami*. Nowadays, when vegetarianism and veganism are particularly fashionable, we can observe the emergence of such names as *Ciasto pietruszkowe*; *Ciasto marchewkowe*; *Ciasto cukiniowo-marchewkowe*; *Ciasto dyniowe*; *Ciasto z batatów*; *Ciasto fasolowe*; *Ciasto warzywne*.

### D. Appearance

Some descriptions directly characterize the appearance of the cake, e.g. *Sernik z rosą* (finished with soft meringue foam on which dew drops form after baking); *Sernik czarno-biały*; *Sernik biało-czerwony*.

### E. Characteristics of the cake

Some distinguishing elements indicate the way the cake is made, its taste or consistency, e.g. *Sernik bez pieczenia*; *Lekki sernik*; *Puszysty sernik*; *Sernik Puszysty*; *Sernik pulchny*; *Sernik na zimno*; *Sernik mrożony*; *Mrożony sernik*; *Sernik gotowany bakaliowiec*; *Sernik na kruchym cieście*; *Sernik na zimno*; *Sernik na zimno – bez sera*.

Names with a differential marker have primarily an informative and descriptive function. Some of these names function as appellatives, some of them in specific situations may become unique names (cf. *sernik Magda*; *Sernik z rosą*).

## 3. PROPER NAMES

As opposed to common names with information, nomination and identification functions, the remaining group of product names has persuasive and, consequently, marketing functions. Sales specialists distinguish four persuasive appeals that are used in product naming: appeal to reason (rational), appeal to the senses (sensory), appeal to emotions (affective) and appeal to imagination and intuition (egocentric) (Zboralski, 1995, pp. 70–73).

### A. Appeal to reason

Product names emphasize the practical, utilitarian or material benefits associated with the choice of the product in question. In the case of cake names, properties such as ease of preparation, speed, are emphasized, e.g. *Piernik “Last minute”*; *Ekspresowy piernik*; *Ekspresowe ciasto kokosowe*; *Ekspresowe ciasto z owocami*; *Szybkie ciasto czekoladowe*; *Szybki blok czekoladowy*; *Szybkie ciasto z agrestem*; *Ekspresowe ciasto czekoladowe*; *Ekspresowe ciasto budyniowe*; *Ekspresowe ciasto z jabłkami*; *Ekspresowe ciasto z mikrofali*; *Raffaello bez pieczenia*; *Snickers bez pieczenia*; *Ciasto malinowo-waniliowe bez pieczenia*; *Sernik – łatwy*. Emphasizing the practical properties of a given product can be a great advantage for many customers, as is the case with names emphasizing the dietary benefits and naturalness, e.g. *Lekkie ciasto z owocami*; *Zdrowy keks*; *Fit ciasto z mąki kokosowej*; *Fit ciasto z maliną*; *Szarlotka w wersji fit*; *Ciasto jogurtowe fit*; *Dietetyczne ciasto marchewkowe*; *Ciasto jagodowe – dietetyczne i zdrowe*. This group resembles appellatives with a differential marker the most.

### B. Appeal to the senses

In this case, the name of the product suggests the physical experience offered by it, e.g. freshness, unique taste, captivating smell, velvety touch. The sense of taste is directly influenced by names such as: *Niebo w gębie*; *Pychotka malinowa*; *Słodka pokusa*; *Słodka Ula*; *Słodka teściowa*; *Pychotka*; *Pysznotka*; *Słodka Arkadia*; *Czekoladowa rozkosz*; *Czekoladowa dokładka*; *Tort marzenie*; *Niebiańskie ptysie*. Indirectly, some of them also speak about the pleasures associated with eating them. The appearance of the cake is particularly emphasized, for the purpose of which appeals related to nature (vegetation, relief forms) are used: *Leśny mech* (the cake is covered with green crumbles that resemble moss); *Leśne runo*; *Kora orzechowa* (when the cake is cut, the nuts form a texture similar to the bark of a tree); *Bukiet róż*; *Tulipan* (the names come from the shape of the cake); *Poranna Rosa* (coconut and cheese balls embedded in the cake); *Meduza* (jelly with pineapple slices); *Fale Dunaju* (when cut, a pattern appears which resembles meanderings created by the river); *Wyspa*; *Malinowa wyspa*; *Rajska wyspa* (names associated with the shape of cakes, but also with their ingredients); *Błękitna laguna* (the cake is covered with blue jelly, which resembles blue water, a delicacy which resembles an island can also be put on the jelly); *Góra lodowa* (undulating top covered with white and chocolate glaze). The name of the *Piegusek* poppy-seed tart draws attention to one of the ingredients. *Bomba tiramisu* or *Kopiec kreta* speak of a spherical shape; *Szachownica* or *Metrówka* / *Metrowiec* emphasize

the shape and length; *Poduszkowiec* after baking has protruding squares in the shape of cushions. The shape and colour of the designation are also emphasized by names referring to animal species: *Drapieżny gepard*; *Lampart*; *Tygrysek*; *Żyrafa* (spots); *Krokodyl*; *Wąż* (long roulades); *Cielaczek* (patches); *Ślimak*; *Ślimaczek* (roll-up dough); and the attributes of animals: *Krokodyle oczy*; *Bawole oko*; *Oko słonia*; *Bycze oczy*; *Oczy sowy*; *Pawie oczko*; *Bycze jaja*; *Bawole serce*; *Szyja żyrafy*; *Futro lamparta*; *Wielbłąd* (humps); *Czekoladowy język* (spikes). Extremely suggestive are the names containing colour terms, *Barwna Babka*; *Kolorowa tęcza*; *Tęczowe ciasto*; often associated with precious metal or stone: *Złocisty wieniec z jabłkami*; *Złota rosa*; *Złote runo*; *Złota rybka*; *Ciasto bursztynowe*; *Ciasto rubinowe*. Apart from positive and neutral sensual impressions, there are also controversial names evoking rather negative emotions, although the motivations for the creation of names are neutral, e.g.: *Pajęczynka* / *Pajęczyna* / *Pajęczek* (spider web pattern on top – a Halloween cake); *Salceson* (dark cake with apple pieces); *Styropian* (white cream mass); *Paznokiec* (almond flakes on top); *Lom* (broken pieces of biscuits). Among the names of confectionery products, the sensory type is particularly productive, because it is the senses that determine the choice of a given product.

### C. Appeal to emotions

An affective appeal is to move the sphere of feelings and impressions. Film and literary associations create positive emotions and arouse sympathy, e.g. *Królowa Śniegu*; *Kraina lodu* (Eng. frozen); *Kubuś*; *Smerfy* (Eng. *The Smurfs*); *Smerfetka* (blue cake); *Gumiś* (purple); *Baba Jaga* (cottage shape); *Gargamel* (“To kawał piernika z tego Gargamela” – Polish wordplay); *Shrek* (green cake) and *Fiona* (pink cake); *Kopciuszek* (colourful layers?); *Czerwony Kapturek* (red jelly); *Reksio* (white cake colour); *Pszczółka Maja* (black-orange colour); *Calineczka* (strawberry jelly?); *Król Lew* (Lion brand name chocolate bar); *Makowa panienska* (poppy seed); *Sindbad żeglarz* (boat-shaped moulds); *Izaura* (light-dark as the skin of the heroine of Brazilian soap opera); *Esmeralda*. Names of this type use effortless names based on titles of well-known films, series and fairy tales for children, which are to evoke appropriate associations with the designation (Gałkowski, 2008, p. 284). One of the bloggers, describing a cake called *James Bond* / *Ciasto Jamesa Bond* emphasizes the effect on emotions: “This delicious dessert has enchanted us as easily as James Bond conquers women’s hearts – and that’s probably where the name comes from”. Some of the names also refer to authentic characters, such as *Pani Walewska* / *Ciasto Pani Walewskiej* (*Psychotka*); *Ciasto Marysieńka*; *ciasto Królowej Saby*; *Ulubione ciasto Królowej Matki*. The names of representatives of



the ruling, administrative and other higher social classes are also used, e.g. *Ciasto królowej*; *Oczy carycy*; *Ciasto sultańskie*; *Ciasto kapitańskie*; *Ambasador*; *Ciasto Prezydent*; *Ciasto szefa*; also the clergy, e.g. *Biskup* (one of the layers is purple; apart from it, the taste is exquisite). Specific feelings are aroused by names associated with people that are close, such as *Ciasto królewskie mojej mamy*; *Babka mateczki*; but also *Zemsta teściowej* (a difficult to make, multi-layered cake) or *Uśmiech teściowej* (“Sour like the smile of your mother-in-law”). Some of the names may also reflect patriotic feelings, e.g. *Patriota*; *Patriotka*; *Ciasto niepodległości* (baked on the Independence Day).

Feelings and impressions are also addressed to by a large group of names bearing various connotations, cf. *Biała dama*; *Szyszkowa dama*; *Weselna dama*; *Czarna dama*; *Kokosowa panienka*; *Wiśniowa panienka* (cf. *Makowa panienka*). Against their background, names connotated negatively, not associated at all with confectionery products, seem interesting, e.g. *Topielec*; *Popapraniec*; *Szalony Popapraniec*; *Pleśniak*; *Ciasto dziwak*; *Dziwaczek*; *Orzechowy pyszałek*; also those drawing attention to the flaws of some social groups, e.g. *Pijana zakonnica*; *Pijany franciszkanin* and using colloquialisms and vulgarisms, e.g. *Dupa pawiana* / *Pupa pawiana* (refers to the shape of one of the layers); *Cycki murzynki* / *Piersi murzynki* / *Cycki teściowej* (characteristic shape of the top). However, it is not surprising that names which violate the linguistic and cultural taboos and create a scandalous atmosphere (just like advertising) are remembered, so they are extremely effective.

#### D. Appeal to imagination and intuition

An effective name is a name that is targeted at a specific recipient and that gives the impression that the product is exclusively for them. In line with fashion, there is a tendency to emphasize that something is healthy, dietetic, vegan or gluten-free, cf. *Fit baranek*; *Ciasto wiewiórka fit*; *Ciasto Kubuś “odchudzone”*; *Wegańskie ciasto czekoladowe*; *Bezglutenowe ciasto marchewkowe*; *Wegańskie ciasto marchewkowe fit bezglutenowe z jabłkami – proste*. For the poor or the busy, there are special recipes such as: *Bieda* (a few simple ingredients) or *Leniwiec* (easy and not very labour-intensive). Adults are offered a *Ciasto pocieszenia* (with alcohol); *Tort dekadentcki*; and other cakes suggesting an alcoholic ingredient, e.g. *Pijana śliwka*; *Pijana wiśnia*; *Upita krówka*; *Upity torcik*; *Pijane brownie*; *Alkoholik*; *Pijak*; *Pijus*; *Pijany Izidor*; *Pijany Franek*; *Pijany Wacek*; *Pijany Zygmunt*. Sometimes, another recipient may be specified, e.g. *Ciasto dla zakochanych*; *Ciasto urodzinowe dla dzieci – chałupki wiejskie*, etc. A clear definition of the consumer leads to specialisation and may help in the choice of a particular recipe.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The names of products (including confectionery products) are the group of names in which it is difficult to draw sharp boundaries between the appellative and onymic spheres. There are borderline elements that can denote individual products in certain contexts and a group of products with the same set of characteristics in others.

2. The proposed grammatical (predicative and pronominal) tests are helpful in distinguishing between proper names and common names. The translation test for product names is not useful, because this group of chrematonyms often has its equivalents in foreign languages.

3. In addition to grammatical tests, it is important to define the function of the product name. In order for the name to be effective in terms of marketing, its creators prepare motivators to appeal to the mind, senses, emotions and imagination. If, in addition to the information, nomination and identification function, there is also a marketing and persuasion function, we can be sure that we are dealing with proper names. The more individual and original the name is, the greater the chances of selling the product that is identified by it.

*Translated into English by Marek Robak-Sobolewski*

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### ABSTRACT

The subject matter of the paper is the names of confectionery products which, as chrematonyms, belong to the category of proper names. The objective of the deliberations is to provide an answer to the questions in the area of onomastics: where is the borderline between proper names and common names and is it possible to determine this precisely? The properties of onyms, the specification of their (marketing-persuasive) function, as well as grammatical tests (a predicative and pronominal test) which the particular entities have undergone lead to the division of the product names into three groups: common names, common names with a differential marker, and proper names. There exist, however, borderline elements which can denote individual products in specific contexts, and a group of products with identical characteristics in other contexts.

**Keywords:** onomastics, onym, chrematonymy, product names, proper name and common name

### ABSTRAKT

Przedmiotem artykułu są nazwy produktów cukierniczych, które jako chrematonimy sytuują się na pograniczu nazw własnych. Materiał wyekscerpowany został z różnych blogów kulinarnych, dostępnych w latach 2017–2018. Cel rozważań to odpowiedź na pytania z zakresu onomastyki, gdzie jest granica między nazwą własną a pospolitą i czy jest możliwe precyzyjne jej wyznaczenie. Analiza semantyczna onimów, określenie ich funkcji (marketingowo-perswazyjnej) i testy gramatyczne (test orzecznikowy i zaimkowy), którym poddano poszczególne jednostki, prowadzą do podziału nazw produktów na trzy grupy: nazwy pospolite, nazwy pospolite z członem dyferencjalnym i nazwy własne. Istnieją jednak elementy pograniczne, które w określonych kontekstach mogą oznaczać produkty indywidualne, a w innych grupę produktów o takich samych zespołach cech.

**Słowa kluczowe:** onomastyka, onim, chrematonimia, nazwy produktów, nazwa własna, nazwa pospolita

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